

136 Porter's Pass

1705

Rev. William Burnham

Torn down late 1880s

From 300 Years of Faith – history of Kensington Congregational Church

The first minister was the Rev. William Burnham, a graduate of Harvard in 1702. His ministry began on November 11, 1707, and he was ordained on December 10, 1712. He was a leader in affairs of the village and state. Married twice, he had a family of nine children. Part of his salary was in pieces of fertile land, yielding sufficient revenue for comfortable support. In 1717 the first school was established: the Bandbox School located on Christian Lane. Mr. Burnham died on September 23, 1750, having been considered a sound preacher, referring much to the Scriptures. He donated the land for the Christian Lane Cemetery. His tombstone reads: Here lies interred the body of Rev. Mr. William Burnham first pastor of the Ch. of Christ in Kensington who having served his generation according to the will of God fell asleep September 23rd 1750 in the 66th year of his age and 37th of his ministry.



First pastor of the Christian Lane [i.e. Kensington Congregational Church]. Cemetery inscription reads: "Here lies Interr'd . . . [Rev. Mr. Burnham] who having served his generation according to the will of God fell asleep . . . In the 66th year of his age . . ." At age 20 he married his wife, Hannah. He remained as minister of the church in Farmington in "the Great Swamp" and Farmington in turn voted on Dec. 23, 1707, to "give him fifty acres of land." North records that he and wife, Hannah, had nine children, but only eight are listed in records. After his wife's death in 1747 he married a "widow Buckingham" (no further identification given) and died soon after their marriage. (Probably the MRS. William Burnham listed in the marriage record) Hale cemetery records give his date of death as 1750, North lists date as 1747. He was "a faithful preacher and a sound pastor", serving the church in Kensington until his death in the 38th year of his ministry. His will divided his estate equally between his three sons and mentions his Spanish-Indian woman, Maria, and provides that she shall "have a comfortable life . . . at the expense of my children". North. History of Berlin: p. 159-161.

Rev. William Burnham (1684-1750) son of William Burnham & Elizabeth Looms. He married Hannah Wolcott (1648-1747) daughter of Samuel Wolcott & Judith Appleton. They had children: Lucy, Sarah, William, Hannah, Abigail, Josiah, Mary, Appleton, and Samuel. He remarried to Anne Foster (1681-1765) daughter of Isaac Foster & Mehitable Wyllis. She married first Rev. Thomas Buckingham. William and Hannah were buried in Christian Lane and Anne was buried in Center Cemetery in Hartford, CT.

After Rev. Burnham died, Samuel Porter took ownership of the house.

Genealogy

Married 1st Mindwell Griswold from Windsor. They joined Berlin Congregational Church sometime between 1780 and 1795. He married 2nd Widow Elizabeth (Hart) Percival, mother of James Gates Percival. Elizabeth and Samuel were married in Kensington Congregational Church; both were from Berlin. Samuel died at age 88. Infant daughter of Samuel and Mindwell Griswold Porter born and died 1800-06-05, buried Bridge Cemetery Berlin Congregational Church Records - p.33 Berlin Records - p.249 Hale - p.47 Brandegee - p.32 North, Catherine - 104, 113

Samuel Porter (1750-1838) son of Joseph Porter & Hannah. In 1779 he married Mindwell Griswold (1760-1810) daughter of Noah Griswold & Mindwell Philips. They had children: Mindwell, Nathan, Almira, Laura, Norman, Samuel, Joanna, Chloe, and Sophia. Mindwell was buried in Bridge Cemetery. In 1812 Samuel remarried to Elizabeth Hart (1769-1846) daughter of Mathew Hart & Elizabeth Hopkins. Elizabeth had been married to Dr. Percival (see 381 Percival Avenue). Samuel was buried in Bridge Cemetery. Elizabeth was buried in Ledge Cemetery.

Samuel Porter's son, Norman became a wealthy businessman and felt the house was too old. His sisters begged him to reconsider so Samuel moved the house about 1840 to Seymour Road (now Massero Drive). It was just west of the American Legion Hall. In 1840 Norman built a new house in the original location of Burnham's home where it remains on 136 Porter's Pass.

Rev. Burnham's home was not maintained and was torn down in the late 1800s